

**ANNUAL REPORT
1986-87**

**Alberta Health and Social
Services Disciplines Committee**

Alberta Health & Social Services Disciplines Committee
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I. INTRODUCTION

This is the tenth *Annual Report* of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee. Chapter I of the report briefly presents the Committee's history, mandate, and structure. Chapters II, III, and IV describe the work and activities of the Committee for the period of April 1, 1986 to March 31, 1987.

A. History of the Committee

The ability of Alberta to meet the health care and social service needs of its population depends, to a large extent, on ensuring an adequate supply of appropriately trained personnel. The responsibility for undertaking the necessary planning and research to achieve this goal cuts across departmental lines. A cooperative and coordinated approach is required if the manpower needs of the health care and social service sector are to be met.

The Alberta Health Manpower Committee, established in 1973, represents the first attempt to coordinate manpower planning activities of a number of departments. The Departments of Health and Social Development, Labour and Manpower, and Advanced Education, as well as the Alberta Hospital Services Commission were represented on the Committee through their senior officials. The Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development served as the Chairman of the Committee.

Reorganization of provincial government departments in 1975 necessitated a new interdepartmental coordinating body. The Ministers of Social Services and Community Health, Advanced Education and Manpower, and Hospitals and Medical Care established the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee in August 1976. A non-governmental Chairman was appointed in 1977 to head the Committee.

In subsequent years, a number of changes occurred in departmental representation on the Committee resulting from departmental reorganizations. The latest series of changes took place in 1986, following the splitting of the former Department of Social Services and Community Health.

As of March 31, 1987, five departments were represented on the Committee: Advanced Education, Career Development and Employment, Community and Occupational Health, Hospitals and Medical Care, and Social Services. The Professions and Occupations Bureau had observer status on the Committee.

B.	Mandate of the Committee	The Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee was established: - To advise the government on major human service manpower, training, and related issues; - To coordinate the five participating departments' planning and research activities for health and social service manpower; and - To collect pertinent and up-to-date manpower data to support the Committee's research work. The terms of reference of the Committee appear in Appendix A on page 11.
C.	Structure and Membership of the Committee	The Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee is made up of a non-governmental Chairman and six senior officials from the Departments of Advanced Education, Career Development and Employment, Community and Occupational Health, Hospitals and Medical Care, and Social Services. Mr. Elvin Christenson, F.C.A., was appointed by ministerial order to chair the Committee. The Committee has an interdepartmental Secretariat to provide research and planning support. It consists of staff members from the participating departments. Dr. Raymond Pong of the Department of Social Services serves as the Executive Secretary of the Committee. A number of changes in membership occurred in 1986-87. Mr. John Lafrance was replaced by Ms. Diane McAmmond of Alberta Social Services. Mr. Larry Charach left the Department of Community and Occupational Health, and his position on the Committee was filled by Dr. Habib Fatooh. There were similar personnel changes in the Secretariat. Ms. Janet Davidson was replaced by Mrs. Brenda Johnson of Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care. Upon the resignation of Ms. Pat DeZutter of Alberta Advanced Education, Mr. Ralph Westwood and Mr. Bobby Seeber of the same department joined the Secretariat. A list of the members of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee and the Committee's Secretariat appears in Appendix B on page 13. In addition, there is a Manpower Planning Unit which provides administrative and research assistance to the Committee, the Chairman, and the Secretariat. It undertakes manpower data collection, publication of documents, and other duties on behalf of the five participating departments. Under the supervision of the Executive Secretary of the Committee, the Manpower Planning Unit is administratively based in the Department of Social Services.

II. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE MANPOWER POLICY

The primary mandate of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee is to advise the Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the five participating departments on major issues concerning human service manpower and training. This role was especially important in 1986/87 as Alberta was in a period of economic readjustment. Government fiscal restraint and reduction in grants to hospitals, universities and colleges, social service agencies, etc. could have important manpower implications in the short and medium term.

The Committee paid special attention to the effects of changes in the provincial economy on health and social service manpower. The Committee examined a wide range of issues: manpower impacts of the government's fiscal restraint program, strategies to make the manpower system more adaptable, rational reallocation of resources, innovative manpower and training strategies, etc. The work of the Committee in this area culminated in a half-day workshop for the Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the five participating departments and the Minister Responsible for Professions and Occupations. The purpose of the workshop was to brief the Ministers and Deputy Ministers on the current status of health and social service manpower in light of the restraint program.

Besides examining broad manpower issues and trends, the Committee addressed a number of specific manpower concerns: immigration of health and social service personnel, professional legislation, rehabilitation therapy manpower, native human service manpower and training, nursing manpower and education, and pharmacy manpower.

Rehabilitation therapy manpower has been a major concern for some time. A major study was done by the Committee in 1985/86 to address the critical shortages of physical and occupational therapists. The government accepted the recommendations of the Committee and substantially expanded the physical therapy and occupational therapy training programs at the University of Alberta. In 1986/87, the Committee continued to monitor the manpower situation in this area and participated in a national study on physical therapists, occupational therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists, which was coordinated by the Federal/Provincial Advisory Committee on Health Human Resources.

The Committee also paid special attention to manpower implications of professional legislation. This was to ensure that statutory regulation of human service occupations and manpower policies were compatible.

Concerns regarding a shortage of pharmacists in the province were expressed by both the service sector and the educational sector such as the Alberta Hospital Association and the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the University of Alberta. As a result, the Committee initiated a study on pharmacy manpower. Similarly, in response to the gradual transfer of health care and social services to native people, the Committee continued its work on native human service manpower and training issues.

As nurses constitute one of the largest manpower groups in the health care sector, the Committee closely monitored the demand and supply of nursing personnel. This was done through data and information obtained from surveys conducted by the Committee and projections generated by the Nursing Manpower Model.

Realizing that it cannot possibly address all health and social service manpower issues, the Committee has encouraged other government departments, the human service sector, and the educational sector to undertake manpower planning work in order to meet their specific human resource needs. To this end, the Committee, through the Manpower Planning Unit, has provided manpower information to assist other organizations in their manpower planning and research activities.

III. PLANNING COORDINATION AND LIAISON

Besides its policy advisory role, the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee provides a mechanism for interdepartmental consultation and cooperation on manpower matters. The Committee brings the participating departments together on a regular basis to exchange information and views on manpower issues which are interdepartmental in nature and which have broad implications. In addition, the departments cooperate on manpower data collection, research, and other planning tasks.

The Committee also works closely with other departments and governmental bodies on manpower planning and related matters. This is to ensure that recommendations made and actions taken by the Committee are consistent with overall government policies. In view of the fact that professional legislation often has important manpower implications, the Committee has maintained a close working relationship with the Professions and Occupations Bureau and the Health Disciplines Board, which are responsible for developing regulatory legislation for a variety of occupational groups. This liaison function was provided by the Executive Director of the Professions and Occupations Bureau who was an observer on the Committee.

In order to keep abreast of developments and manpower planning activities in other parts of the country, three members of the Committee's Secretariat (Mrs. Vivien Lai, Mr. William Novasky, and Dr. Raymond Pong) have maintained close contacts with their counterparts in other provinces and territories through their membership on the Federal/Provincial Advisory Committee on Health Human Resources, which reports to the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health.

Members of the Secretariat also maintained informal contacts with professional associations, post-secondary educational institutions, and the service sector in order to be aware of manpower concerns and emerging manpower issues.

IV. MANPOWER INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive and reliable health and social service manpower information and data are needed to support the research and planning work of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee. The collection of up-to-date manpower data is also a mandate given to the Committee by the Ministers (see Appendix A on page 11). Over the years, the Committee and its participating departments have developed a human service manpower monitoring system that has many interrelated components.

In order to consolidate and improve its manpower information system, the Committee commissioned Stevenson Kellogg Ernst & Whinney to review its work in this area and to assess user satisfaction. Based on an analysis of the work of the Committee and interviews with some major users of manpower information, Stevenson Kellogg Ernst & Whinney made a series of recommendations on how the Committee's manpower information collection and dissemination system could be improved and made more efficient. Implementation of these recommendations will be a major task for the Committee in the coming year.

The participating departments undertook a number of major data collection and manpower projection projects under the auspices of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee. These included annual surveys of employers of health and social service personnel, human service training programs in post-secondary educational institutions, and professional associations and registration boards. These surveys were designed to monitor manpower supply and demand in the human service sector. A survey of graduates of health and social service training programs was initiated by the Department of Career Development and Employment.

Manpower data and information collected by the Committee were shared with other government departments and non-governmental organizations through a series of publications. Information was also made available to the public upon request.

These manpower information development projects are briefly described as follows:

A. Survey of Professional Associations and Registration Boards

Membership and registration data of professional associations and registration boards are an important source of information on manpower supply. A survey of 62 health and social service professional associations and registration boards was undertaken by the Manpower Planning Unit in December 1986. The survey was conducted by means of a mailed questionnaire. Information was requested from each organization on the number of registered members, the number of persons joining and leaving the profession in the previous membership year, sources of new members, and the availability and nature of continuing education programs. Excellent cooperation was obtained from the professional associations and registration boards surveyed.

B. Survey of Employers of Health and Social Service Personnel

The Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee began surveying employers of health and social service personnel on a regular basis in 1979. The surveys were designed to collect information on the current number of health and social service practitioners and the current levels of vacancy and personnel turnover in the province.

A survey of employers was conducted on March 31, 1986 by the Manpower Planning Unit, with assistance from the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care and the Department of Advanced Education. Over 4,400 employers of health and social service personnel and self-employed professionals in the province were contacted. With a response rate of 99 percent, the survey obtained manpower data on 81 human service disciplines. Additional information on specialties and levels of educational preparation was collected on ambulance personnel, child care workers, registered nurses, and social workers.

C. Survey of Health and Social Service Education Programs

The Program Coordination Branch of the Department of Advanced Education conducted, on behalf of the Committee, a survey of health and social service training programs in post-secondary educational institutions in Alberta. Since training programs are a major source of human service personnel, the purpose of this survey is to obtain information on potential manpower supply. The survey was designed to collect data on the number of applicants, enrollment quotas, actual enrollments, and number of graduates from training programs. Over 110 programs in universities, technical institutes, community colleges, vocational centers, and hospital-based training programs were surveyed.

D. Post-Secondary Graduate Employment Follow-up Survey	The Department of Career Development and Employment conducted its first post-secondary graduate employment follow-up survey in 1986. The objectives of the survey were to gather data on 1984-85 graduates of colleges and technical institutes in technical or career related programs and to identify characteristics of graduates which were conducive to successful job search. About 7,600 graduates from 117 programs were surveyed. Many of the surveyed programs were health and social service training programs. The survey obtained information on the ability of graduates to find employment in the areas in which they had received training. This has provided an indirect but valuable source of information on manpower demands in the human service sector.
E. Nursing Manpower Model	The Program Coordination Branch of the Department of Advanced Education maintained the Nursing Manpower Model on behalf of the Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee. The Nursing Manpower Model is a computer program which can provide nursing manpower projections based on different assumptions and data inputs. As nurses are one of the largest occupational groups in the health care sector, the Committee was kept informed of nursing manpower trends and manpower projections.
F. Publications	The Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee publishes, in addition to its <i>Annual Report</i>, a number of manpower documents which are widely distributed to other government departments, non-governmental agencies, educational institutions, professional associations, and public libraries. Through these publications, the Committee shares its manpower information with the public and promotes the awareness of human service manpower issues. In December 1986, the Committee released the results of its March 31, 1986 survey of employers. The report, <i>Health and Social Service Personnel Working in Alberta, 1986</i>, contains manpower information on 81 disciplines in the health care and social service field. Included in the report is information on the number of full-time equivalent positions, vacancy rates, and turnover rates of 81 occupational groups, as well as historical manpower trends. About 6,000 copies of the survey report were distributed to the public.

In December 1986, the Program Coordination Branch of the Department of Advanced Education published, on behalf of the Committee, a report entitled *Alberta Health and Social Service Education Programs Inventory, 1985-86*. This report contains information on human services training programs in Alberta, including enrollment data, program duration, and number of graduates. Several hundred copies of the inventory were sent to interested organizations and individuals.

A report entitled *Health and Social Service Manpower in Alberta, 1985* was published in December 1986. This report, the eighth in a series, provides basic manpower information and statistical data on 35 health and social service disciplines. The information contained in this publication was obtained from the survey of employers, the survey of professional associations and registration boards, and the survey of human services training programs. About 800 copies of the publication were distributed.

G.

**Information
Requests**

One of the tasks of the Manpower Planning Unit is to provide health and social service manpower information to the public in order to encourage manpower planning activities and to help solve manpower problems. As the Committee's work has become better known, the number of requests for publications and information has steadily increased. The Manpower Planning Unit provided manpower information upon request to Alberta government departments, government departments in other provinces, educational institutions, professional associations, human service agencies, consultants, and the general public.

APPENDIX A

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ALBERTA HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DISCIPLINES COMMITTEE

1. In conjunction with appropriate agencies, develop on an ongoing basis inventories on:
 - i) Health and social services disciplines training programs;
 - ii) Health and social services disciplines supply and distribution.
2. Review pertinent studies, data and executive decisions from other jurisdictions on the training and supply of health and social services manpower.
3. Review short and long range plans from appropriate agencies for:
 - i) Health and social services disciplines training program;
 - ii) Health and social services disciplines supply and distribution.
4. Review alternative requirements to meet the needs for the development of health and social services in the future.
5. Define areas of particular concern in the training and/or supply and/or distribution of health and social services personnel and recommend ways of resolving these concerns.
6. Advise from time to time on request for the need for in-depth studies in particular areas of manpower training and supply.
7. Undertake such other related activities as may be required.
8. Submit an annual report on the activities of the Committee.

APPENDIX B

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ALBERTA HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DISCIPLINES COMMITTEE

(As of March 31, 1987)

Members of the Committee

Mr. Elvin A. Christenson, F.C.A., Chairman, Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee

Dr. D. E. Berghofer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Services Division, Alberta Advanced Education

Dr. Habib Fatooh, Director, Planning and Evaluation, Alberta Community and Occupational Health

Dr. A.V. Follett, Senior Medical Consultant, Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care

Mr. D.J. Junk, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy Development Division, Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care

Ms. Diane McAmmond, Executive Director, Service Innovation Resources, Alberta Social Services

Mr. Don Ogaranko, Director, Labour Market Training Information Branch, Alberta Career Development and Employment

Members of the Secretariat

Dr. Raymond W. Pong, Executive Secretary, Alberta Health and Social Services Disciplines Committee (Alberta Social Services)

Mrs. Brenda Johnson, Research Officer, Research and Strategic Planning Branch, Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care

Mrs. Vivien Lai, Director, Research and Strategic Planning Branch, Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care

Mr. Ian Montgomerie, Research Officer, Labour Market Training Information Branch, Alberta Career Development and Employment

Mr. William E. Novasky, Director, Program Coordination Branch, Alberta Advanced Education

**Mr. Bobby Seeber, Research Officer, Program Coordination
Branch, Alberta Advanced Education**

**Mr. Ralph Westwood, Assistant Director, Program
Coordination Branch, Alberta Advanced Education**

**Observer Mr. Dennis Gartner, Executive Director, Professions and
Occupations Bureau**

Alberta